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Cover image: Forest on Denman.
photo by Dreadful Imagery

SPECIAL
INTEREST

Shucking Oysters: Thank You Weekend

By Alex Allen

THANKSGIVING. Most of us celebrate this day with family and friends. My claim to fame is that my mother, for some reason or another, did not like turkey. Never cooked a turkey in her life. Maybe it's because turkeys are the size of small children. In school, I was the only kid who was eating chicken sandwiches after Thanksgiving. I felt odd, yet the family tradition continues.

Following Truth and Reconciliation Day last weekend, I wondered about how First Nations feel today about Thanksgiving and all its trimmings. It's no surprise, that the holiday is one with deep significance in history and culture — and controversy. While Canada was the first country in North America to celebrate Thanksgiving, the Indigenous Peoples of Canada have been holding annual fall harvest celebrations way before the arrival of European settlers.

Brian Rice, an assistant professor in the department of religion at the University of Winnipeg and a member of the Mohawk nation, said "All of our ceremonies, all of the things that we do, have to do with giving thanks. So it's part of a continuum of something that's been practised for thousands of years."

It's common for young Indigenous people to feel some discomfort toward Thanksgiving, said Jacqueline Romanow, a Métis from the Red River Settlement area and chair of the Indigenous studies department at the University of Winnipeg. "It supports the myth that this land was discovered. It creates this idea that the Indigenous people here just simply handed over everything to the new sort of arrivals, that there was no conflict, that it was a very peaceful and happy encounter — which, in fact, is the exact opposite of what happened," she said.

It is a dark history indeed, about how the Indigenous people on the East coast saved those early colonialists from starvation, and then the following year, those same colonialists would murder the Indigenous people and take their land. It's no wonder the Indigenous feel "ambivalent" towards the holiday.

"Every day that we wake up, every day that we have another opportunity to walk on this beautiful gift, which is our mother the Earth, to experience life, we give thanks. And that is our world view," Indigenous educator, Biindigegizhig Deleary said. "So for Canadians and for all people, I think we really have to get to a place in the world where we appreciate what we have, and by appreciating what we have, we begin to take care of it better."

Theresa Sims, elder and educator at the Ska:na Family Learning Centre, added "We always celebrated the harvest and what creation has provided for us. Mother Nature has provided everything that we need, but we have to learn how to respect it and care for it, and also keep it for the next seven generations."

Sharing went beyond food on the table, it extended to knowledge and technique. Sharing in the Indigenous community is a virtue. As Jordan Wheeler, a Cree from the George Gordon First Nation said, "The sign of wealth is not how much you have but how much you give away. On paper we should be quadrillionaires."

"In my culture we give thanks every day. We thank Creator for allowing us to be on this Earth for another day. If we pick berries or hunt an animal we offer tobacco and give thanks for their sacrifice ... Plants and animals aren't commodities, they're family." Wheeler adds, "But to roll all those daily thanks into one day of the year and think you have it covered? Too easy and convenient — and people call 'Indians' lazy!"

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And then I read in the news, that food insecurity is an “urgent public health crisis” for Indigenous kids. As families across Canada struggle with the increasing cost of groceries, a new study says First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and youth have been disproportionately affected by food insecurity for years. Family physician Dr. Rebekah Eatmon sees parents in tears, frustrated that they can’t provide enough healthy food for their children. “I’ve never met an Indigenous parent that doesn’t want to do the best for their kids,” said Eatmon, who works at an Indigenous clinic in Vancouver and in two remote First Nations in BC.

Many Indigenous children have obesity, but are nutrient-starved, because their diets consist largely of more affordable carbohydrate or fat-heavy food, the study said. “Families know what the best things are for their kids,” Eatmon said. “But the reality is the blueberries will spoil in a couple days and the Eggos will stay for months inside their freezer.”

The long-lasting effects of colonization are driving factors behind much of the food insecurity Indigenous people face, because of the disruption of their sources of healthy food, such as traditional hunting, fishing and gathering. “Over thousands of years, Indigenous populations have adapted to a diet suitable to their environment,” the study said. That diet included animals and plants harvested locally. Adding to that, the cultural sharing practices involving potlucks and ceremonies were banned and the loss of inter-generational knowledge of traditional foods soon followed.

There is hope. Programs are re-establishing traditional foods within Indigenous communities to fight food insecurity. Other examples include community greenhouses and community freezers.

Meanwhile, Romanow said Thanksgiving in Canada should also be a time of recognizing First Nations. “I think that if the Canadian government is really sincere about changing the relationship with Indigenous Canadians, that this would be a start, that it isn’t just Thanksgiving ... [it’s about] thanking Indigenous people and recognizing them, quite frankly, as one of the three founding nations of this country.”

With files from CBC News and Black Media Press. 🍷

Green Wizardries, The Harvest Now & the Harvest to Come

By Maxine Rogers

THIS YEAR, we are having a very good harvest. The tomato crop has been outstanding for all the gardeners I have talked to. We are still harvesting tomatoes from our polytunnels. I spent a large part of today making a batch of catsup. One of my sisters insists I shouldn’t call it catsup because it is so very good and nothing like the commercial product. However, I did use the tomato catsup recipe from The Joy of Cooking. Like everything home made, it takes some time to cook and process it in a water-bath canner but it is vastly better than anything you can buy.

I also made a pint of elderberry syrup from our first crop of elderberries. I think most gardeners on Hornby and Denman would benefit from growing some elderberry shrubs. I bought ours three years ago and planted them in the garden. The first year, we didn’t get many berries and the second year the same but as the bushes were two years old, I was able to prune them close to the ground and this year, they shot up aggressively and set huge bunches of berries.

The flowers of the elder can be made into a very good sparkling wine. They are medicinal and can be helpful in many preparations to reduce fever. The flowers are also much valued by the pollinators and they smell sweet. The blooms used to be picked and soaked in water overnight and used to wash the hands and face as a beauty treatment.

The berries were hugely popular with the birds and we produced a stunning crop of white-crowned sparrows on the berries we shared with them. We even had one pair of white crowns nest in one of our elder bushes. I did manage to secure some berries for us.

I suppose these berries could be grown in a berry house to ensure you get all the berries but I am not that organized and the birds are very important to delight us and to keep the ecological balance of the garden. White-crowned sparrows eat the seeds of weeds and grasses as well as a lot of insects and fruit, particularly elderberries and blackberries.

TIDE TABLE

• Secondary Tidal Station Ford Cove •
• Source: tides.gc.ca •

2023-10-05 (Thu)

Time PDT (m)	(ft)
04:30	1 3.2
12:15	4.6 15
17:46	3.7 12
21:26	4 13

2023-10-06 (Fri)

Time PDT (m)	(ft)
05:20	1.2 4
13:29	4.5 14.9
19:50	3.6 11.9
21:53	3.7 12.1

2023-10-07 (Sat)

Time PDT (m)	(ft)
06:19	1.5 5
14:41	4.5 14.8

2023-10-11 (Wed)

Time PDT (m)	(ft)
04:17	3.5 11.4
10:21	2 6.6
17:16	4.5 14.7
23:52	2.5 8.1

2023-10-12 (Thu)

Time PDT (m)	(ft)
05:07	3.6 11.9
11:00	2.1 6.9
17:35	4.5 14.7

2023-10-13 (Fri)

Time PDT (m)	(ft)
00:12	2.2 7.3
05:52	3.8 12.5
11:36	2.2 7.4
17:52	4.5 14.7

2023-10-14 (Sat)

Time PDT (m)	(ft)
00:33	1.9 6.4
06:36	4 13.1
12:11	2.4 8
18:09	4.5 14.7

2023-10-15 (Sun)

Time PDT (m)	(ft)
00:57	1.7 5.4

2023-10-16 (Mon)

Time PDT (m)	(ft)
01:25	1.4 4.5
08:09	4.3 14.2
13:26	3 9.7
18:49	4.4 14.4

continued on P.4...

...continued from P.3 Elderberries used to be made into jams, pies and wine. They seem to have fallen out of favour but should make a comeback as they are so easy to propagate and produce a good crop of nutritious berries. I grow mine to make a syrup from the berries that is a traditional remedy for colds and the flu.

Before I grew my own, I bought dried elderberries from Harmonic Arts, a herb company in Cumberland. They sourced their berries from Poland and Croatia and other foreign parts so it is much better to grow our own here. The syrup made from fresh berries, ginger, cloves and honey is much more tasty than the syrup made from dried berries but both work well to help people get over colds.

This January, I will prune my elder shrubs close to the ground and take a bunch of cuttings to give to friends and the Garden Club. If you want to have some elder cuttings, please call me at 335-1088 to reserve some. The little cuttings can be pushed into the ground where you want them to grow but they will not do well if they have to compete with grasses and weeds. I prepare a planting hole by mixing in a couple of spades worth of compost and then I cover the area with maple leaves. I stick the cutting directly into the soil and leave it. They make great wildlife bushes even if you are not interested in harvesting the berries for your own use.

Another crop that did well this year was plums. A friend gave me a couple of flats of plums and they were so sweet and good I could not walk past them without eating one. I made them into plum sauce with our own onions, garlic and hot peppers. This sauce will go really well with chicken and rabbit dishes.

The harvest to come is much on our minds too. Today, my husband spent most of the day hauling compost out to the

ARTS&LIT

Flowers for Mao

By Jane Masutani

I have taken this title from a Leonard Cohen poetry collection called "Flowers for Hitler" that I've had in my possession since 1970! I haven't thought about Mao for many years. I have a little green hat with a red star on it that I picked up in Chinatown many years ago as a curiosity, but it goes without saying, I have never worn it except as a joke to show to friends. But I've always thought of Mao with fondness and admiration for having kicked the Western powers out of the country and regaining China's sovereignty after a 100 years of humiliation under the Western yoke.

I watched a 25 minute BBC documentary last night on the life of Mao, apparently the best bio. doc. on him on the net, and I came away feeling enlightened but rather depressed about his legacy and what he had done for China. The announcer spoke with just the right tone. He didn't sound like he hated Mao or was hellbent on character assassination, or was angry. He was the BBC voice of reason. He was just giving us the facts. But something felt off, and I couldn't put my

garden to mulch a huge bed for garlic. Now is a good time to plant garlic. I will go out and place the cloves of garlic on the surface of the beds. This way, I can make sure my rows are straight and that I have left large enough paths between the beds. Once sure of all that, I plant the garlic under the mulch. To grow the best garlic, you have to lime the soil and give the garlic a lot of nutritious compost. They love seaweed.

It is also time to trim excess runners on the strawberry plants. I will only leave one runner per plant but if you need a lot of new plants, you can leave two or even three runners. Strawberries only produce well for three years so keep an eye on the age of your plants and if in doubt, lift the plants and throw away any plants that have black, straggly roots. They are way too old.



finger on it.

I shared the video with my husband because he always has a more clear-eyed view on these things than I seem to. He remembers people's names instantly as well, which is another cause for me looking up to him. He is basically the oracle. But before I share what he had to say about the documentary, let me tell you what I knew about Mao and the situation in China from the 1930s onward before watching this documentary.

Mao was handsome and slim for only a brief time in his youth, like Churchill. He had four wives, the last one being an entertainer with the stage name Blue Apple. He could ride a horse. He swam across the Yangtze River in his early 70s to prove his virility (Although the fact he was with Blue Apple should have been enough!) He went on the "long march" to consolidate power. When he attained power in 1949 some of his policies didn't work as planned. And that's an understatement. He represented and fought for rural China, the peasants. He developed a culture of hero worship in the country. He gave China back its sovereignty.

Chiang Kai Shek was a slim, handsome man all his life. He could ride a horse. He married one of the wealthy Shanghai Soong sisters, renowned in the 1920s for their beauty. He had a nickname in the 1930s in Washington, "cash my cheque". The United States were backing him, he was their man in China, and apparently always asking for more money. His army was 4 times the size of the Communist, Mao's army, due to all that moola. And he still lost. He represented, apart from the hidden hand of the US, the Chinese moneyed class, landlords and business people in the cities. The desperately poor farmers in the countryside, 80 percent of the population, gave assistance to Mao's communist troops in the form of a bed and food during the long march. They knew which side their bread was buttered on so they didn't offer aid to Chiang KaiShek's soldiers. When Chiang lost the long fight in 1949 he and his followers took much of the money and treasures of the country to Taiwan with them.

When the dust of victory settled, Mao, Jou EnLai and other officials grappled with the language issue. Should they adopt the Roman alphabet? They had a 10 percent literacy rate. The characters were too difficult to learn. They decided to simplify them, to keep their connection with the past. But they simplified them so much that their ancient classics can only be read, ironically, by the Japanese, who have retained the original characters in their writing system. But, everyone can read and write in today's China.

Another issue was what to do with the surviving, 46 year old, last Ching dynasty emperor, Pu Yi. I have a soft spot for this weedy little stereotype of a Chinese man with round black glasses and slightly buck teeth, and so did Mao and the people around him. They didn't want him dead, they wanted him as a shining example of reform. He was put in a re-education camp for several years where he was bullied when it became known who he was and it became obvious that he was almost incapable of getting dressed by himself or carrying or serving food without spilling it, not having done these things before. He ended up as a park gardener in Beijing. They even arranged a partner for him. They said, after all, an emperor needs a consort. They chose somebody's unmarried middle-aged sister, an office worker, and he lived out his remaining years quite happily with her. But, what a roller-coaster ride of a life the poor man had! He spent his life yearning for the medieval palace splendor of his youth. His one true home. He told his jailers about his life in the palace, how from the age of 13 the eunuchs had brought a succession of palace maids to his room at night. When he found himself married off at 17 he left his bride sitting on the edge of the bed in her red dress and veil. She was a complete stranger, he said, the palace maids were his friends. But, he grew fond of his wife and in old age one of his happiest memories was riding around the streets of Beijing on a bicycle incognito with his beautiful bride on the back. But, enough about poor Pu Yi.

Perhaps Mao was good at being a revolutionary but once he got into power he didn't actually know how to pull off his

idea of modernizing the country, bringing it into the modern world. His ideas often seemed to bring disaster and the people closest to him were perhaps too afraid to offer their ideas. Also, a revolution is a violent thing. During the French Revolution there were aristocratic heads being chopped off to a large clapping, appreciative audience for three years straight! That's a lot of dehumanizing violence. You say you want a revolution...

Seems like Deng Hsiao Ping, the man who came after him, was the one to open up China to the modern world. The documentary ends by saying that China is communist in name only now. It may not be strictly communist in rule, but the common people do have their opinions heard on the local level and so the government is responsive to the will of the people. And there is the traditional communist long-term planning, with 5 year plans. Corporations do not run the country.

In the end, we're left with the terrible truth of there being a ton of human suffering during a large part of Mao's rule. Was it all worth it to break free from Western powers? What would China be like now if "cash my cheque" would have won? The Philippines? Ultimately it doesn't seem morally right (does it?) to have Caucasians running the entire world. Asia has a right to be Sovereign, as does Africa, The Middle East and everywhere else. The US encompasses 4.5 percent of the world's population.

The documentary does say, and the modern psychoanalyzing was a nice touch and most likely true, we're all human after all, that Mao was brutalized and traumatized by the intensity of the long-term violence thrown at him and his men by the West in their herculean efforts to keep control of China. He'd lost his wife and four year old son to the violence. That he was a different man at the end of it.

By 1953 he had so built up the Chinese army that they were able to beat back American troops in Korea and the US had to draw a line across the country, freeze the fighting, and ac

continued on P.6..



...continued from P.5 cept defeat.

It was so many years ago now that I bought the Mao hat. I also bought “China Pictorial” on visits to Chinatown. It featured lovely images of pretty girls in the countryside smiling with rosy cheeks, picking cabbages. Now, even young people in China laugh at those old propaganda magazines and Mao’s little red book, the faded slogans painted on old barns. Mao’s chubby face benevolently gazing out onto ghost town streets.

The youth of China have left Mao behind. They’re interested in BTS and Korean dramas, like the rest of us. Matsuki’s assessment of the documentary is that ultimately, there should be credit where credit is due. The East is red, and that’s only because of Mao. 🍷

Letters to the Editor

Hornby Tourist Vehicle Traffic Overburdens In- frastructure

THE following letter is a response to the Hornby Island LTC’s review of its bylaw on short-term rentals in which I provide research correlating the increase in tourist related vehicle volume with the proliferation of short-term rentals. I argue that the infrastructure (Denman’s terminal-to-terminal roads and limited ferry space) is severely overburdened. Given that the HI Economic Enhancement and HI short-term rental groups are campaigning for more short-term rentals throughout the remaining months of the year, this is the time for Denman islanders to communicate their views to the HI LTC.

The Hornby Economic Enhancement group’s (HICEEC) resolve to keep the short-term rental bylaw unchanged and expand into the remaining months of the year would significantly impact an already overburdened infrastructure— Denman terminal-to-terminal roads and the Baynes Sound Connector. Thus, most Denman residents would support the Advisory Planning Commission’s recommendations to reduce the months of operation from the current five to the original three and to require Temporary Use Permits. These changes would control and balance the number of economically valued short-term rentals with our shared preserve and protect mandate and Denman’s OCP transportation bylaw on minimizing negative traffic impacts.

The following rebuttal to the HICEEC Vice Chair’s claims illuminates the profound influence the present volume of Hornby tourist traffic has on the infrastructure.

The HICEEC Vice-Chair recommends keeping the OCP Bylaw on short-term rentals unchanged because self-regulation works.

Fact: The number of short-term rentals since the 2014 bylaw was approved has increased from 14 to estimates of between 80 and 120, with many others operating illegally throughout the year and without oversight. In response to a concern that more short-term rentals would affect affordable housing numbers, the Vice-Chair (and Consultant Patricia Mulroney) claim there’s no data linking short-term rentals with the affordable housing crisis. In fact, published university and B.C government research strongly contradict this view.

FACT: In 2019 Dr. David Wachsmuth, Canada Research Chair of Urban Governance at McGill University, contributed to the first comprehensive study correlating the rapid growth of short-term rentals to the decline in affordable housing. His research, which focused on Tofino and a number of other B.C. communities, concluded that **too many short-term rentals are not licensed (one half, according to an Airbnb study); that they drive up rent; and that they are responsible for removing 19.1% housing rentals from the market (Sept. 21, 2023 Bloomberg).** In addition to documenting the trend towards commercial operations, his data concluded that short-term rentals are increasing 17.8% each year and are responsible for renters paying 20% more for rent. In June of this year, he found that of 28,510 active listings, 16,810 were taken off the long-term rental market (CTVnews.ca September 21, 2023).

The Joint Union of B.C. Municipalities and the Province of B.C. Advisory Group on Short-Term Rentals Report concludes that **short-term rentals have a “staggering” impact on affordable housing.** This report confirms that short-term rentals removed more than 16,000 B.C. homes from the residential rental pool (UBCM.ca June 30, 2021). Cortes Island, with a population similar to Hornby’s, conducted a study that also directly links the decline in affordable housing and increases in rental instability to the growth of short-term rentals (CBC News, August 14, 2023). Anecdotal and circumstantial evidence on Hornby support these conclusions.

FACT: Given the dramatic effect short-term rentals have on the current housing crisis, the B.C. Minister of Housing is scheduled to introduce strong legislation this Fall implementing the Joint Advisory Group’s recommendations. **Changes could include eliminating commercially run short-term rentals; requiring rental platforms like Airbnb to confirm business licences; and requiring communities to collect short-term rental data to be shared in a Provincial data base (June 30, 2021 Final Report of Priorities for Action UBCM.ca).**

FACT: The above statistics strongly argue that the steady increase in Hornby tourist vehicles travelling across Denman since 2017 is connected to increases in legal and illegal short-term rentals. The BCF Annual Report to March 2023 states that of the short routes, only Routes 21 and 22 showed a significant revenue increase. Traffic statistics from 2017 to the present show steady increases of up to 9.91%. In May 2023, 13,100 vehicles represented a 17.88%

increase from 2022 and in June, 15,114 vehicles represented a 9.34% increase. Once the traffic statistics for the last three months are posted, they should support what ferry staff and Denman residents experienced —that the number of tourist related vehicles keeps increasing.

FACT: The tens of thousands of vehicles and numerous service trucks supporting the Hornby tourist economy generally race back and forth across Denman. Unless you live on the Denman speedway between the ferry terminals, you cannot imagine the assault such high numbers of vehicles— in July 2022 18,147 and in August 19,625—have on our formerly tranquil community. Also, too many drivers engage in reckless driving to get ahead of the ferry line even when the two ferries at Denman West were running. Service vehicles that cannot manage the Denman Road hill and many racing Hornby drivers render the alternative multi-use Lacon/McFarland route treacherous for local drivers, walkers, and cyclists.

FACT: The problem Hornby traffic is creating for Denman is recorded on the BCF Denman Community Page. The major concern of the 170 residents who attended the May 26 BCF facilitated roundtable event is **safety and quality of life**. A full summary and online survey of the experiences islanders shared about encounters with terminal-to-terminal recklessness, soon to be posted, will verify the frustration, anger, and despair Denman residents feel about an escalating problem that violates our preserve and protect mandate and OCP bylaw on transportation.

THE HICEEC Vice-Chair questions whether short-term rentals have an effect on ferry space.

FACT: This question could be easily answered with a credible up-to-date survey of how many illegal and legal short-term rentals are currently operating and what percentage of the total tourist traffic volume short-term rentals represent. What is known, however, is that too many tourist vehicles towing trailers and RVs and tourist industry service vehicles take up from two to even four ferry spaces and that the wait times are excessive. Residents moved to Denman because of a desire to live in a tranquil, rural environment with easy ferry access to off island jobs, schools, services, and hospitals. However, residents who live on the speedway to Hornby no longer enjoy a tranquil environment and Islanders no longer have assured ferry boarding at Buckley Bay or at Denman West without long wait times.

FACT: The backed up traffic forces many residents to avoid ferry travel when Hornby tourist traffic is expected to be high. Particularly frustrated, are off island workers and families with children going to school or participating in off island activities. One summer Sunday when covering a three hour shift at the Art Centre, I observed the major intersection into Denman Village frequently clogged with Hornby vehicles that often reached to Lacon Road. The single remaining lane cannot accommodate coming and going local and offloaded ferry traffic.

When traffic was moving, drivers continued to race through the Northwest intersection, violating the 30 mph speed limit. Most importantly, this backed up traffic and speeding creates peril for our ambulance and fire truck drivers, local drivers, and cyclists who are forced to use one single lane.

FACT: Businesses and artisans complain that excessive wait times at either Buckley Bay or Denman West have a strong negative effect on revenue. They are paying directly for increases in delivery and service costs and indirectly for wait times that cut into work time when making trips off island to pick up or deliver supplies. Excessive ferry wait time is also reducing day visitor revenue. Not so many years ago, large groups of senior cyclists regularly visited Denman in the high season to circumnavigate the island, visit craft studios, shop and eat. Most now avoid Denman as do many day visitors from the Comox Valley and Parksville area.

FACT: Since the round table meeting, BCF has made changes to mitigate the impact of Hornby tourist traffic on the infrastructure. They hired extra flaggers at the Denman West Terminal and often, but not consistently, monitor the flow of traffic so that it does not back up at both Denman terminals to gridlock major intersections. Although the two ferry system improved service during the week, it did not alter the traffic volume problems.

The Friends of Denman Forests, the group that galvanized community support around the traffic volume issue last winter, emphasize that changes to the Gravelly Bay Terminal cannot be made until the infrastructure issue is managed. They support, along with those who attended the May round table event, the need for a direct ferry to Hornby as the only long-term option for Denman (see the BCF Denman Community Page). In the meantime, both islands are saddled with a dysfunctional and inadequate cable ferry until the next budget cycle in four years.

Pulitzer Prize winner Wallace Stegner writes, “All sins are sins of excess.” Denman is suffering from an excess of Hornby tourist traffic. Approval of the Advisory Planning Commission’s recommendations, therefore, should result in fewer short-term rentals and a significant reduction of traffic volume. Also, by enforcing licensing, Hornby would be in compliance with other Trust islands, communities and cities across Canada, and the forthcoming B.C. Ministry of Housing legislation on short-term rentals.

Until there is strong oversight and regulation of Hornby short-term rentals, Denman’s preserve and protect mandate and OCP remain compromised and the infrastructure dramatically overburdened.

Respectfully, Sharon Small,
Denman Resident and Retired University Professor 🍷

continued on P.8...

...continued from P.7 **Subject: Response to columns by Caitlin Johnstone**

I am responding to recently published columns by Caitlin Johnstone in the Aug 10th, 26th, Sept 7th, 14th, 21st and 26th editions. Caitlin, it must be wonderful to know that you are a thousand times smarter than your 40 million fellow Canadians, and that your world views are spot on. All the rest of us can just be dismissed as a bunch of dumb sheep. I have some news for you: you are not the only person who follows world events from a variety of disparate sources. I have been a news junkie from the age of 8, I have travelled widely and read media in many countries. I grew up in a country without a functioning democracy. Good governance is not an easy, simple job. Democracies, especially parliamentary based democracies, are infinitely preferable to authoritarian dictatorships. Your characterization of the Russian invasion of Ukraine is so far removed from the facts that I would like to see the horse blinders you are wearing.

My advice to you and to TIG's readers is simple: VOTE! Vote in municipal, provincial and federal elections, always, every time. If you are particularly passionate about politics, join the party of your choice and work to foster change at the grassroots level. In your case, Caitlin, you might need to form a party of one. If you are so dissatisfied with our current model of governance, and our proximity to the evil United States (PS: news to you but many US Democrats are good people), then I recommend that you immigrate to Russia, China, Iran or possibly North Korea. You might learn a good deal about freedom of expression. And please learn some humility; you are NOT smarter than everyone else.

Sincerely,
Sandra Harrington

Ed. Note - Caitlin Johnstone is an independent journalist based in Melbourne, Australia. 🍷

Letter to the Editor
Helen Grond

"Never assume malice when incompetence will suffice as an explanation" - Hanlon's Razor

"Sufficiently advanced incompetence is indistinguishable from malice" - Fred Clark's Law

IT has been shown that if government officials have been caught side stepping their own legislated procedures, protocols and laws, the public is willing to forgive them if they promptly take responsibility and appropriate action to correct the situation. Unfortunately, they typically do the opposite. Governments normally double down on their mistakes, attempt to cover them up or lay the blame on their chosen fall guy. This is how they lose public confidence.

This is exactly what happened in parliament on September 22nd when the Trudeau government, somehow, unbelievably invited a former Nazi SS veteran to be honoured by parliament. It's impossible to imagine how a world leader could make such a blunder. Trudeau refuses to take personal responsibility and the reputation of our country (especially Trudeau) has been

trashed worldwide. Canadians of every stripe are unified in their shared horror. Right on cue, Trudeau named speaker of the house, Anthony Rota as the fall guy to take the hit for his colossal failure.

In case you thought that government malfeasance was restricted to the Trudeau administration, look no further than our local government - the Islands Trust. Concerned residents are shocked at the behavior of Trust planners with respect to an ongoing debacle regarding a proposed cell tower application by Rogers over the last 16 months. At every turn, the Trust has avoided following due process. Those actions have potentially compromised our Trustees and cast serious doubt on the fairness of our local elections held in 2022. The Trust has been exposed providing advantages to the corporate interests of Rogers over the rights of local residents. This has been substantiated by a recent Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) release. A lawyer retained by concerned Hornby residents doesn't hold back when she says the whole thing stinks to high heaven.

If only the Trust would take responsibility for their actions! Instead, the seeds of a cover up have already been planted with hints that a formerly employed junior planner may be poised to take the hit. The Trust must take mature, decisive and corrective measures to avoid disgrace or worse. Let's hope they step up and do the right thing because the alternative means we do not have a functional democracy!

Timeline of important dates in the Rogers application process

June 10, 2022 - Brian Gregg (Rogers' agent) opens communications with Islands Trust.

August 17, 2022 - Rogers makes a formal application to install a tower on Hornby Island and the Trustees are not informed.

September 9, 2022 - Local Trust Committee passes model strategy for cell tower placement on Hornby Island.

October 15, 2022 - Trust elections take place with the community being kept in the dark during the campaign about the August 17th, tower application.

November 21, 2022 - The community and the Trustees first learn of the Rogers' application in local papers and the consultation process is advanced quickly through the holiday season.

January 13, 2023 - Rogers closes community consultation without carrying out a legally required, in person public meeting on Hornby. The Trust seems to accept this and doesn't press for the required public meeting as of October 3rd, 2023.

September 8, 2023 - A staff planner at an LTC meeting claims that the Trust planners were unaware that the adoption of the more rigorous Model Strategy had occurred in a September 9, 2022 LTC meeting. The planning staff had full control over all meeting agendas, motions, briefings and had themselves developed the model strategy.



Ukraine War: That Same Old Refrain

By Sally Campbell

IT is a continuing source of amazement to me that almost every mention of the war in Ukraine elicits a response to the tune of: “Well, we have to get rid of Putin and to end the war”. Or: “We can’t negotiate with Putin in power; he’s a madman”. Do people not see the pattern here? Were people not paying attention when the name was Saddam Hussein? Osama Bin Laden? Muammar Gaddafi? Bashar al-Assad? We can also examine the staggeringly long lists of US military interventions contained in David Swanson’s new book: *The Monroe Doctrine at 200 and What to Replace it With* (2023). It’s not only the idea of opposing the evil leader to justify yet another long and brutal war with no win for either side; lies are also told to motivate a compliant public to just keep quiet and focus on things closer to home. Lies like weapons of mass destruction (Iraq) and chemical warfare against one’s own people (Syria). Now the lie is that provocation by the US/NATO in stationing troops on Russia’s borders these last few years has nothing to do with the war. Or that the US- (and Canada-) assisted 2014 coup in Ukraine was all about democracy, and not about removing a democratically elected leader who tried to walk the line between Russia and the west. Or that NATO is not involved in placing the rest of us in peril of a nuclear war.

We need to understand that mainstream corporate media is not telling us how or why this war got started. We need to seek out independent sources to even find out that Jens Stoltenberg, NATO Secretary-General, on 7th September 2023, acknowledged that NATO provocation DID lead to the Russian invasion, saying: “First of all, it is historic that now Finland is member of the Alliance. And we have to remember the background. The background was that President Putin declared in the autumn of 2021, and actually sent a draft treaty that they wanted NATO to sign, to *promise no more NATO enlargement*. That was what he sent us. And was a pre-condition for not invade Ukraine (sic). Of course we didn’t sign that.” The Russian invasion occurred in February of 2022. Had NATO agreed to stop its encroachment on Russian borders, these countries might not be at war right now.

People cite the Crimean annexation as another reason for supporting this war. What most of us perhaps don’t remember (or even know, given mainstream media bias) is that Crimea was long part of Russia, only recently (collapse of USSR) made part of Ukraine by Yeltsin, and that the people of Crimea *voted in a referendum* to rejoin Russia after the 2014 coup deposing Ukraine’s president. Crimea, like the Donbass region in Eastern Ukraine, has a majority of Russian speakers who align with Russia. Do they want to fall under the grip of US world dominance?

We also conveniently forget the 2 Minsk Accords, which if

implemented, could have prevented this ugly war. Why were they not implemented? They called for an autonomous Donbass region and a neutral Ukraine. What, to those of us who aren’t arms dealers, is problematic about a neutral Ukraine? We have past examples of Switzerland, Austria and Finland as neutral countries. This distributional thinking - that you need to be on one side or the other of nuclear armed states - is dangerous.

And we are clearly seeing western military presence in Asia as provocative and escalatory vis-à-vis China. Do we really need to poke that bear with whom we have had a healthy trading relationship?

For me, the most frustrating aspect of this entire way of thinking is our willful blindness of the fact that *all wars eventually end*. WW2 ended with negotiation after Hiroshima & Nagasaki. We know now that Japan was ready to surrender and that war could have ended without dropping nuclear bombs, but the bombs were dropped anyway. Stoltenberg also declared in his recent speech (above) that Europe is in its most precarious position since WW2. Why are we ignoring that?

We are also indoctrinated by media saying there must be a total victory. Total victory from the point of view of the west means Ukraine joins NATO; we know that is something Russia will never agree to. In realspeak that means keeping this war going for many more years, until Ukraine is utterly destroyed, and there is another war more important going on somewhere else.

We countries at the edge of nuclear-armed superpowers have to be able to get along with our nearest neighbours!

All wars end with negotiation after the fighting stops. First the fighting has to stop. We do not have to sanction any side but the side of life by pressuring for a **ceasefire now**. A ceasefire can happen overnight. A ceasefire gives breathing space and allows for people to create the conditions for negotiations (and compromise) to take place. Even Chair of US Joint Chiefs of Staff Mark Milley compared this war to WW1, (speech to Press Club November, 2022) calling it “unwinnable”, and saying that if you can negotiate, do it. He was ignored by the White House.

We in Canada ought to be lobbying hard for ceasefire now. Let’s be on the right side of history.




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Cannabis Pioneer Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

By Victoria Cannabis Buyers Club

Friday, September 29, 2023

VICTORIA B.C.: A Lifetime Achievement Award is being presented to Victoria cannabis pioneer Ted Smith at the Grow Up Conference, held at the Victoria Conference Center on Sunday October 1, 2023. With over 28 years working in the cannabis field, Ted has been an instrumental force in the cannabis scene long before it became a multibillion dollar industry. The Grow Up Conference features leading experts in cannabis genetics, horticulture and law, with dozens of vendors and high-quality speaker panels.

Ted is humbled to receive this award from a legal industry where he has long existed on the fringes. "It is a distinct honour to be recognized by the cannabis industry for my work advocating for patients and medical cannabis. For a long time I thought the legal industry didn't care about my work, it makes me so thankful to see my advocacy work has left a lasting impression."

The Grow Up Industry Awards Gala is a national annual event honouring cannabis professionals and companies and recognizing excellence and innovation in the cannabis industry. 🍇



Photo by Zenon Kai Imaging

Vancouver

By Mr. Unknown

Lights are seen from afar
Canada's third-largest city
Tall buildings loom
Pollution is a pity

Vancouver the city
Quite different from the island
Apartments replace trees
Expensive to live

Outer Vancouver includes
Coquitlam, Richmond and Surrey
Burnaby, White Rock, Delta
New Westminster, Maple Ridge and Langley

Yaletown, Granville Island
North Vancouver and Gastown
Each contributing to the name
Of Vancouver who was crowned
The man who "discovered" this land
These days we all frown

Downtown feels dark
Sunlight blocked by towers
Stores, offices and condos
Traffic slows by the hour

Ferries bring us here
To the big metro place
Swartz Bay to Tsawassen
Duke Point to Horseshoe Bay

Vancouver is a fun visit
For a day or two
But soon you may find
This escape is too much for me or you

Come see its landmarks
Come see its city views
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Modern and new



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Opinions expressed in the Grapevine do not necessarily reflect that of the Publisher.

Inciting violence, hate speech and pejorative language will not be tolerated.



Whether covering events that entertain us, presenting issues that concern and affect us or highlighting the many interesting and gifted people we call neighbour, the Grapevine celebrates the diversity and inclusivity of our shared island life. The following is our policy on content:

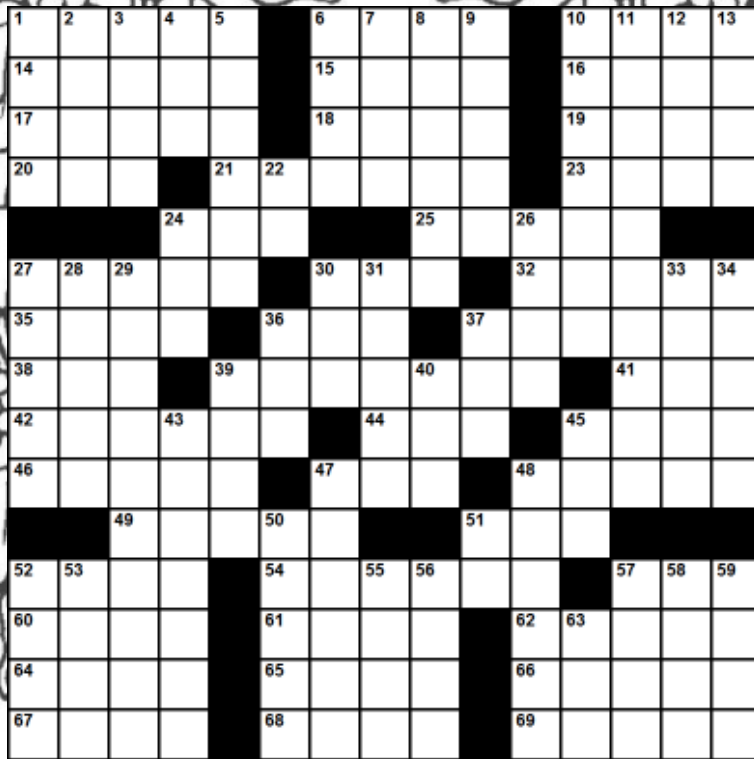
- Profiles of individuals, history, reviews and op ed are published free of charge.
- Literary content including poetry, stories, belle lettres are published free of charge.
- Promotional content for products, services, programs, and events will be published at going advertising rates.
- Public service announcements, notices of meetings, and news releases will be published for a fee. Exceptions will be made for emergencies where the public is immediately endangered.
- With regret, no exceptions can be made for non-profit status.
- Letters to the Editor are published free of charge.

The Grapevine is happy to provide an open, public forum for all islanders to speak and be heard. We are steadfast in our commitment to uphold freedom of expression.

As the record of our times, every issue of the Grapevine is a compilation of that week's submissions. We do not editorialize content, nor do we censor. We ask that writers moderate their own content. The Grapevine reserves the right to edit for brevity.

We are open to contributions from all Denman & Hornby Islanders. If you've something to say, send it our way! No copy and paste submissions. In your own words, please!

• GRAPEVINE CROSSWORD •



• ACROSS •

1. Follower of Zeno
6. Cartel since 1961
10. Brain's white matter
14. Smutty flick
15. Brief note
16. Aviator's stunt
17. Certain monkey
18. Exile isle
19. Analgesia target
20. Address bk. line
21. Milk choice
23. Irrational number
24. Augusta stat
25. Chain parts
27. Of atmospheric weight
30. Actress Rita
32. Believe without question
35. Not fer
36. Buzz
37. Non-threatening
38. Fled
39. In name
41. Broadcast letters of old
42. Circus

44. Adjust

44. Adjust for proper functioning
45. Be introduced to
46. Hair net
47. Cry over a mouse
48. Crystal ball user
49. Reject with derision
51. Boxer, e.g.
52. Doggie bag bits
54. Hex
57. Govt. cops
60. Asian cuisine
61. Continental coin
62. Dabbling ducks
64. Gull cousin
65. Becomes gray
66. Egret's cousin
67. Blades
68. Be a blacksmith
69. Choose a candidate

• DOWN •

1. Dalmatian feature
2. Made haste
3. Contract variety
4. Country lodging
5. Fine brandy
6. Auspice
7. Ill-gotten gains
8. Mummify
9. Raccoon like carnivore
10. Seward citizen
11. Acacia
12. Quantum theorist Niels
13. Copied
22. If not
24. Alley target
26. Never, to Keats
27. Biting remarks
28. At another time
29. Beatle drummer
30. Eviscerate
31. Emulate a jester
33. Peptic problem
34. Fuels
36. Body joint
37. Gangster's weapon
39. Has confidence
40. Albanian currency
43. Alarm signals
45. Actress Tilly
47. Sufficient
48. Mollify
50. Flightless birds
51. Pull off
52. Anne Frank's father
53. Actress Perlman
55. Black-and-white cookie
56. Health measure
57. Cabbie's income
58. Congressional caucus
59. Ain't right
63. Electric fish

• TEST YOUR MATH SKILLS •

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Grumpism



“My family told me to stop telling Thanksgiving jokes but I said I couldn't stop cold turkey.”

• LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS •

C	P	A			A	S	H			T	W	A
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person at Room to Grow and
digitally by Zoom. AGENDA:
MOTION: to approve inflationary
increase for CUPE employees.
Summer reflections. Updates from
Fall Fair, Ferry Advisory and HICEEC.
E-mail office@hirra.ca to register.
New members welcome!

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accomplished guitarist/musician.
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al and work references available
upon request. Paul 604-807-
4465

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*The opinions expressed herein do not
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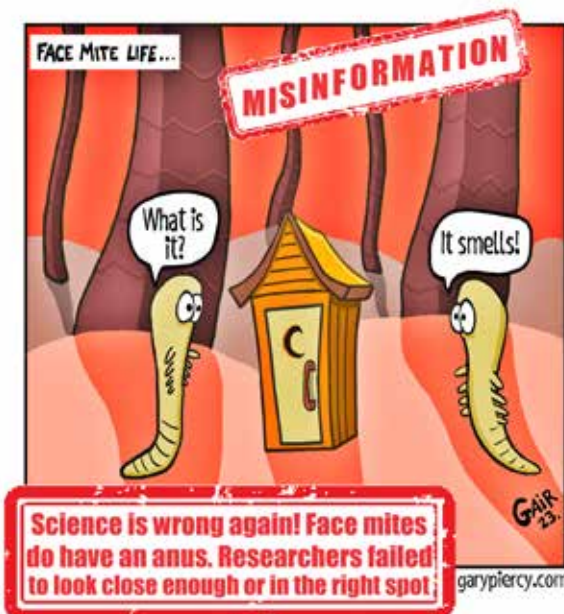
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THURSDAY 5

- RECYCLING CENTRE 2-6pm
- BOTTLE DEPOT 2-6pm
- CAP SITE Hub Comm. Hall 4-7pm
- FOOD BANK Hub Comm. Hall 4-7pm
- FREE STORE 4:30pm-6pm

FRIDAY 6

- Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm
- AA Meeting DI United Church
Gathering Place 7pm

SATURDAY 7

- RECYCLING CENTRE 9-5pm
- BOTTLE DEPOT 9-5pm
- FREE STORE 9-Noon
- FARMERS MARKET Old School 9:30-12:30
- Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm

SUNDAY 8

- ST. SAVIOUR'S Morning Prayer Service
10:30am

MONDAY 9

- Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm
- AA Meeting DI United Church
Gathering Place 7pm

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

TUESDAY 10

- Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm

WEDNESDAY 11

- RECYCLING CENTRE 2-6pm
- BOTTLE DEPOT 2-6pm
- Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm
- HIRRA HYBRID MEETING 7:30pm

THURSDAY 12

- RECYCLING CENTRE 2-6pm
- BOTTLE DEPOT 2-6pm
- CAP SITE Hub Comm. Hall 4-7pm
- FOOD BANK Hub Comm. Hall 4-7pm
- FREE STORE 4:30-6pm

FRIDAY 13

- Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm
- AA Meeting DI United Church
Gathering Place 7pm

SATURDAY 14

- RECYCLING CENTRE 9-5pm
- BOTTLE DEPOT 9-5pm
- FARMERS MARKET Old School 9:30-12:30
- FREE STORE 9-Noon
- Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm

SUNDAY 15

- DENMAN WRITERS GROUP meeting
Senior's Lounge 1:30pm New Members Welcome

MONDAY 16

- Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm
- AA Meeting DI United Church
Gathering Place 7pm

TUESDAY 17

- Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm

WEDNESDAY 18

- RECYCLING CENTRE 2-6pm
- BOTTLE DEPOT 2-6pm
- Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm

THURSDAY 19

- RECYCLING CENTRE 2-6pm
- BOTTLE DEPOT 2-6pm
- CAP SITE Hub Comm. Hall 4-7pm
- FOOD BANK Hub Comm. Hall 4-7pm
- FREE STORE 4:30pm-6pm